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propitiation of the dead. It is sometimes performed upon a son in behalf of his sick father in the hope of staving off the approach of death.

Many interesting and curious practices are recorded. Among the Koita and Motu tribes admission into the realm of bliss is denied to any who have failed to have their noses pierced. Among the same peoples the belief seems to prevail that the tenure of a ghost's life depends upon the survivors—only so long as the names and memories survive among the living can the ghost live. When he is wholly forgotten he dies the second death. Effective use of this idea was made by Maeterlinck in *The Blue-Bird*. In some parts, a belief in the reincarnation of the departed spirit as a newly born babe

is entertained. Widows, whose husbands have been "good providers" and kind, frequently insist upon accompanying them to the land of no return in order that they may enjoy the same care and support there that they have experienced here.

The book is full of information and interest. One might even criticize it on this score, saying that there is no need of repeating illustrations indefinitely; enough is as good as a feast. But there is a certain value in the very abundance of the materials. There can be no question as to the legitimacy of general conclusions based upon so wide an induction. It is to be earnestly hoped that this indefatigable author may be enabled to complete the series upon which he has made so excellent a start.

BOOK NOTICES

Social Environment and Moral Progress. By

Alfred Russel Wallace. New York: Cassell & Co., 1913. Pp. vi+181. \$1.25.

This volume has been much reviewed and much misunderstood. The author makes extreme statements in a manner which repels many who pick up the book for cursory examination, and which therefore tends to hinder a careful and unprejudiced consideration of its claims. The following sentence, italicized by the author, illustrates our point: "Taking account of . . . undoubted facts, many of which are so gross, so terrible, that they cannot be overstated, it is not too much to say that our whole system of society is rotten from top to bottom, and the social environment as a whole, in relation to our possibilities and our claims, is the worst that the world has ever seen" (p. 169). The book contains a great deal of matter, both statistical and argumentative, which is being presented more tactfully and acceptably by other writers. If it were merely the reprinting of a series of campaign speeches, its form would be excusable; but the volume does not have that character. As a treatise, it bears the marks of hurried preparation; and if it came from the pen of an unknown writer, instead of from the distinguished hand of Darwin's evolutionary co-discoverer and colleague, it would

hardly have commanded the attention it has received.

Careful study of the book shows that Mr. Wallace has really done himself injustice through excess of zeal. He admits that up to the end of the eighteenth century, modern civilization was very crude and stationary, and that the sudden application of labor-saving machinery in the nineteenth century put too great a stress upon society (pp. 49, 50.) Such being the case, the social evils of the nineteenth century (many of which persist until now) could hardly have been avoided. A hundred years or so is a short span in the life-history of the human race. Moreover, the author concedes that much progress has been made toward the realization of social wrongs to such an extent that "the omens for the future are good" (p. 137). Elsewhere he writes, in a strain which would do credit to a Christian seer, "The divine nature in us—that portion of our higher nature which raises us above the brutes, and the influx of which makes us men—cannot be lost, cannot even be permanently deteriorated by conditions however adverse, by training however senseless and bad. It ever remains in us, the central and essential portion of our *human* nature, ready to respond to every favorable opportunity that arises, to grasp and hold firm every fragment of high thought or noble action that has been

brought to its notice, to oppose even to the death every falsehood in teaching, every tyranny in action" (pp. 128, 129). It appears, then, that the book has been misjudged, and that its famous author is more of an optimist and seer than many have supposed. His remedy for all evils is socialism (p. 171).

The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature. By J. Abelson, M.A., Litt.D. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. xii+387. \$3.

The author is principal of Aria College, Portsmouth, England. He has produced a valuable treatise which will attract wide attention among those who are interested in this vital theme. It is increasingly admitted by Christian scholars that Judaism deserves a fairer estimate than the world has yet given it. But the author estops himself at the outset from overmuch blaming of Christians by saying that most Jews share the ignorance of the Gentiles with regard to the subject. He writes: "The average Jew, unable to read the originals for himself, is, through a shortage of textbooks, quite incompetent to pronounce an opinion of any worth upon the religion which has meant so much for his fathers and for the world" (p. v).

Dr. Abelson begins by asking how the Old Testament treats the subjects of God's immanence and transcendence (chap. ii). He then considers post-biblical and rabbinic material bearing upon these matters (chaps. iii, ff.). He shows that the rabbis and pious Jews have held to a practical mysticism which recognizes the communion of an immanent God with the individual soul; and he maintains that the Jewish religion, as interpreted by the rabbis, has all the merits of Christianity.

One of the first and most obvious criticisms upon the volume is, that the author does not grasp the development of Hebrew religion as explained by modern Old Testament criticism. This is a common failing of Jewish scholars, who approach the Old Testament too much from the standpoint of its final conceptions as embodied in the prophetic and post-exilic strata. The author is preoccupied by these higher conceptions and their Talmudic interpretation. He is candid enough, however, to place in a footnote the comment of another Jewish scholar, C. G. Montefiore, who has read the work in proof, and who knows a great deal more about the Old Testament than the author does: "It is *not* the case that the historic order of development was as you maintain (1) God far off (2) God near. As a matter of fact, Yahweh was very near in old days. He moved away from Sinai and lived with Israel in clouds and pillars, in the ark, etc. . . . God became far off rather *late*, and then by Immanence He had to be made 'near' again" (pp. 49, 50).

To admit that Dr. Abelson has given useful

emphasis to rabbinic material bearing upon the divine immanence is not to concede that he has thereby shown Christianity to be a needless fact in the world's history. The practical consideration which all "isms" (including Judaism) fail to explain is, that Jesus Christ brings all the spiritual heritage of Hebrew life to fruition within his own person in such a way as to give a new starting-point for the religious history of mankind. Our author is dimly conscious of this phase of the subject when he says, "Truly enough, it [Judaism] has no commanding, immortalized, semi-divine personality at its head such as Christianity has! But this does not vitally affect the question" (p. 12). We venture to assert that it does vitally affect the question. It is just because the Old Testament and Judaism put forward no single, imperial personality to whom the entire process of religion attaches itself, that Christianity was born. The personal relation of Christians to Jesus gives the key to all aspects of theology, including the question of sin, upon which, as Dr. Abelson is constrained to write, "no one can say that the Rabbins took up a decisive final attitude" (p. 77).

We are glad to commend this book at the point where it is confined to its own theme, the immanence of God in rabbinical literature. The author's failure to understand the Old Testament as critically interpreted is part and parcel of his failure to understand the nature and meaning of Christianity. And it is no accident, but a sign of the times in which we live, that the Jewish scholar who corrects the author's Old Testament views should have recently issued a remarkable three-volume commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, as well as a volume on the teaching of Jesus.

What Must the Church Do to Be Saved? By Rev. P. Marion Simms. New York: Revell, 1913. Pp. 324. \$1.00.

The author is a Presbyterian minister in active service; and he cannot, therefore, be criticized as an outsider engaged in finding fault with the church. The book is the outgrowth of a lecture which has been received with sympathy by churches, religious assemblies, Young Men's Christian Associations, and Chautauqua audiences. In its present form, it ought to command still wider attention, for it deserves an extensive reading, whether all its conclusions are true or not. There is truth enough in the volume to carry it far.

The bulk of the book is in Part II, entitled "The Discreditable Situation within the Church." Under this general head the author takes up "the un-Christian divisions" which accompany denominationalism; "the appalling situation in the country church"; "the absurdities of creed-subscription"; and "the abuse of ecclesiastical authority." Part II is concluded